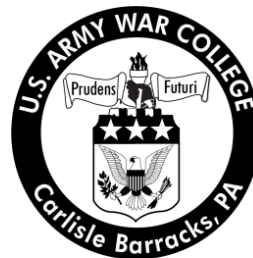


# Civilian Research Project USAWC Fellow

## Building Partnerships and Strengthening Global Relationships Will Keep Army Prepared

by

Colonel Jody L. Nelson  
United States Army



United States Army War College  
Class of 2013

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
<p>The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. <b>PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.</b></p>					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) xx-04-2013		2. REPORT TYPE CIVILIAN RESEARCH PROJECT		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Building Partnerships and Strengthening Global Relationships Will Keep Army Prepared				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Colonel Jody L. Nelson United States Army				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Professor Kim Nossal Centre for International and Defence Policy, Queens University				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Dr. Steven Metz  U.S. Army War College, 122 Forbes Avenue, Carlisle, PA 17013				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution A: Approved for Public Release. Distribution is Unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES Word Count: 4883					
14. ABSTRACT Over the past 12 years, the Army has been engaged in two wars in a fight on terrorism, wars that would not have been successful or possible without the assistance of the United States partners and allies. The building of relationships and maintenance of current partnerships has long been a focus of the United States leadership, starting with the President, the Commander in Chief. These partnerships serve another purpose, that of keeping the homelands safer as well as training the United States military as well as the partner military. While the United States military, namely the Army, has had its focus on Iraq and Afghanistan for the past 12 years, the United States partners, friends, and allies have remained steadfast, waiting or fighting alongside, while the United States Army conducted its wartime mission. Now, the United States has transitioned out of Iraq and is anticipating drawdowns in Afghanistan, the partners are ready to resume relationship building and partner training. This paper will illustrate that focusing on maintaining and building partnerships and strengthening existing relationships through military to military engagements and partnership training is critical to keeping the Army prepared for the future.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Future Mission, National Defense Strategy, Policy, Regional Alignment, Fiscal Constraints, future mission					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT  UU	18. NUMBER OF PAGES  30	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT UU	b. ABSTRACT UU	c. THIS PAGE UU			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code)



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Title: Building Partnerships and Strengthening Global Relationships Will Keep Army Prepared

Report Date: April 2013

Page Count: 30

Word Count: 4883

Key Terms: Future Mission, National Defense Strategy, Policy, Regional Alignment, Fiscal Constraints, future mission

Classification: Unclassified

Over the past 12 years, the Army has been engaged in two wars in a fight on terrorism, wars that would not have been successful or possible without the assistance of the United States partners and allies. The building of relationships and maintenance of current partnerships has long been a focus of the United States leadership, starting with the President, the Commander in Chief. These partnerships serve another purpose, that of keeping the homelands safer as well as training the United States military as well as the partner military. While the United States military, namely the Army, has had its focus on Iraq and Afghanistan for the past 12 years, the United States partners, friends, and allies have remained steadfast, waiting or fighting alongside, while the United States Army conducted its wartime mission. Now, the United States has transitioned out of Iraq and is anticipating drawdowns in Afghanistan, the partners are ready to resume relationship building and partner training. This paper will illustrate that focusing on maintaining and building partnerships and strengthening existing relationships through military to military engagements and partnership training is critical to keeping the Army prepared for the future.





## **Building Partnerships and Strengthening Global Relationships Will Keep Army Prepared**

Over the past 12 years, the Army has been engaged in two wars in a fight against terrorism, wars that would not have been successful or possible without the assistance of partners and allies of the United States. The building of relationships and maintenance of current partnerships has long been a focus of the United States leadership, starting with the President, the Commander in Chief. These partnerships serve another purpose, that of keeping the homelands safer as well as training the United States military as well as the partner military.

While the United States military, namely the Army, has had its focus on Iraq and Afghanistan for the past 12 years, the partners, friends, and allies of the United States have remained steadfast, waiting or fighting alongside, while the United States Army conducted its wartime mission. Now, the United States has transitioned out of Iraq and is anticipating a drawdown in Afghanistan. The partners are ready to resume relationship building and partner training. However, the United States in publishing an addendum to the 2008 National Defense Strategy in January 2012 is sending a new message to partners and friends, there is a new security risk to the United States, fiscal austerity, and it may affect partnerships. So much of what the Army is and does as a profession directly supports the partnership mission, be it through military-to-military engagements, exercises, or operations. As Army leadership continues to search for an organizational mission that supports the President's strategic vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, perhaps they only need to review what they have, themselves, determined to be most important now and through time, partnerships.

This paper will demonstrate that focusing on maintaining and building partnerships and strengthening existing relationships through military to military engagements and partnership training is one of the most critical mission the Army can conduct during peacetime to maintain combat skills and remain prepared for the future.

### Current Policy and Doctrine Drive the Mission

The Department of Defense derives its mission or purpose by analyzing the guidance and directives of the President provided in the National Security Strategy, published in May 2010. Though the National Defense Strategy is the document that drives the Department of Defense missions, the defense of the United States must be guided by the Presidents overall mission for the nation, which is found in the National Security Strategy. The National Security Strategy is the document in which the President first emphasized the importance of relationship with other nations around the world as well as his view of the impact of peace the partnerships could have around the globe. The opening statements in the National Security reflect this importance: “we will be steadfast in strengthening those old alliances that have served us so well. As influence extends to more countries and capitals, we will build new and deeper partnerships in every region.”<sup>1</sup>

The National Defense Strategy, with tasks and purpose derived from the National Security Strategy, was last published in June 2008. In late 2011, the President called for a review of the 2008 National Defense Strategy which resulted in the January 2012 addendum to the National Defense Strategy titled, “*Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense*,” a document that is now considered to be the new National Defense Strategy. The review was necessary for many reasons, but the most

significant were because the world and the United States had changed significantly; the United States had withdrawn from Iraq, Saddam Hussein was no longer in power, Osama bin Laden had been killed, and the United States was facing a new national security risk, fiscal austerity.

The document was clear on the purpose for which it was published; the nation was facing a fiscal crisis not seen in years, and measures had to be taken to turn the tide and the United States had to focus on the homeland. The strategy provided specific guidance on areas to focus as well as implied tasks such as partnerships; the strategy mentioned partnership engagements around the world more than 22 times in the first three pages! While the new defense strategy stressed the importance of partnerships through implied tasks the military to conduct partnership training or military-to military (mil-to-mil) engagement. The document did provide 10 new key military missions to which the military leadership has directed all attention. The 10 new missions in which the force needs to succeed range from wartime tasks such as “counter terrorism and irregular warfare; deter and defeat aggression; project power despite anti-access/area denial challenges”; to tasks that deter or prevent war such as “counter weapons of mass destruction; operate effectively in cyberspace and space; maintain a safe and secure, and effective nuclear deterrent; and missions that provide protection for the citizens of the nation as well as other nations; “defend the homeland and provide support to civil authorities; and “provide a stabilizing presence; conduct stability and counterinsurgency operations; and conduct humanitarian, disaster relief, and other operations.”<sup>2</sup> The issue with the directed key military missions is they are wartime or conflict focused,

downplaying the partnership mission with the exception of one, “provides a stabilizing presence.”<sup>3</sup>

The new defense strategy addressed partnership training and mil-to-mil engagements throughout the document, while specifically assigning the task to the military in only one of the key military missions on page 5 of the strategy with further emphasis, such that there is a direction of how and a hint at frequency: “U.S. forces will conduct a sustainable pace of presence operations abroad, including rotational deployments and bilateral and multilateral training exercises.” Reading the strategy leaves little room for confusion on the role the President wants the United States military to have in building relationships around the world. The President was clear in his goal, “we seek the security of our Nation, allies, and partners.”<sup>4</sup> The way in which the defense strategy tasks the services to perform the partnership mission is the issue. The Strategy implies that the United States national security and stability rests on the shoulders of the military and their ability to maintain and build partnerships. The President implies this by stating in the Defense Strategy that the United States must “seek to be the security partner of choice in pursuing new partnerships”<sup>5</sup> while continuing to maintain relationships around the globe, rebalancing the force to the Asia Pacific, performing ten new key military missions, all in the face of budget cuts.

Shortly after the new defense strategy was published, Army leadership and strategic planners began to seek a long term mission for a force that was transitioning into peacetime. As the fiscal crisis continued and worsened, planners attempted to determine a missions for a force that lacked resources, specifically money, and had new missions based on a new threat environment and new national crisis. The resulting

document was the Army Strategic Planning Guidance, published in February 2013, which set forth planning objectives based on leadership priorities, taking into account the National Defense Strategy and the National Security Strategy as well as the experience and capabilities of the force. The planning guidance set forth a near term objective for the Army to “continue to maintain a global stabilizing presence” which specifically provides as task and purpose to:

expand military to military and military to civilian contacts to increase global environment awareness and understanding. These activities reinforce preventive measures, help build the capacity and competence of U.S> allied and partner forces for internal and external defense, strengthen the cohesion of alliances and increase U.S influence.<sup>6</sup>

The objective set forth in the Army Strategic Planning Guidance is not unattainable; it is a task the Army has been, and is, performing. Over the years, the Army has demonstrated strong capacity for security cooperation and partnership building as they continually deploy around the world participating in exercises and state partnership programs, such as the National Guard State Partnership with Soldiers deployed in 62 countries around the world<sup>7</sup> and a reserve program that has more than 62,000 reserve component military members mobilized. The Army has engaged in such diverse missions as empowering local Afghan women through Female Engagement Teams in Zabul Province, Afghanistan; military team building and counterterrorism efforts across Africa; and MQ-9 training for Italian Air Force maintainers in Italy, to name a few of many.<sup>8</sup> The Department of the Army has even recognized the Army’s capability in security cooperation and partnership building capturing the Soldiers unique professionalism in Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP-1) “*The Army*,” a publication that defines the Army as a profession. The publication notes the unique aspects of what Soldiers have been doing in both Afghanistan, Iraq and around the world, stating

Soldiers “accomplish missions face-to-face with people, in the midst of environmental, societal, religious, and political tumult.”<sup>9</sup> Soldiers have been deployed around the world in various capacities for years, whether in a combat role, humanitarian, or mil-to-mil and partnership training. Regardless of the role, Soldiers have become adept at partnership, based on experiences in combat and nation building.

Soldiers are particularly important in the effort, since all nations have land security elements, even if lacking credible air and naval forces. To the degree that other nations see us as the best army in the world, they gravitate to us to help them achieve the same high standards of military performance, or tie their security to the world’s most capable army.<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps the building new partners and strengthening existing relationships doesn’t seem like a mission for a force that has been at war, when in reality partnership building is a mission that is embedded in the wartime mission, something the force has trained for, conducting and participating in for many years. By the very nature of training a Soldier receives and the mission Soldiers perform, the Soldier and thus the Army as an organization and prepared to perform the partnership mission, which fully supports the policies and guidance of the President, regardless of where the mission may be.

#### Regional Alignment of Forces Enhances Partnership Building

The National Defense Strategy, as the guiding document for the Army, emphasized the partnership mission, designated 10 key military missions, while noting fiscal austerity, provided an additional directed task; rebalance the force to the Asia Pacific region.

Though not a designated key military ask, the rebalancing of forces was directed by the President to provide a more stable, secure environment for the United States through increased presence and partnership in the Asia Pacific region, and arguably around the

globe, given the emphasis in the defense strategy. The Army is carrying out the task through the regional alignment of forces.

For the past 12 years, the majority of ground forces have been embattled in the mission in the Middle East or Afghanistan. With the withdraw of forces from Iraq and an anticipated drawdown of forces in Afghanistan, thousands of Soldiers have returned to home stations to refit and retrain in preparation for the next mission. Regional alignment or single focus training for units that were no longer in rotation for combat was the logical choice, especially for the Army “as the only service designed to provide long-term and persistent presence, Army forces today partner with allies and demonstrate American commitment in key regions around the globe.”<sup>11</sup>

There was validity in the regional alignment, and what it meant to align a unit, was that units were to focus training on a certain region. According to the definition provided by Gen Raymond T. Odierno, Chief of Staff of the Army, units would “possess a regional mission and training focus that includes an understanding of the languages, cultures, geography, and militaries of the countries where they are most likely to be employed.”<sup>12</sup> Time spent in Iraq and Afghanistan had proven that familiarity with local customs and culture had its benefits, especially in engaging local leaders and working with populace and learning what is important at each level. While partnership with either country is tenuous, there was some good that resulted from mil-to-mil training and partnership engagement. Prior to deployments, units devoted what time they had available to learning about cultural nuances, the time spent paid large dividends, but there was more to learn and balancing time between culture training and combat skills training was difficult. The training was crucial, as identified in the center for Army

Lessons Learned Newsletter, “The fact is that cultural awareness enhances Soldiers understanding of Arab insurgents and noncombatant population, and facilitates situational awareness in both lethal and nonlethal operations.”<sup>13</sup> An additional element that complicated the cultural training was the rotation between Iraq and Afghanistan, while combat skills were transferrable between the two theaters, the cultures were completely different. The regional alignment design is a concept that would alleviate this as well as provide unique opportunity for training.

The regional alignment of forces will allow units and Soldiers to focus on a single region, learn the history, the culture, the language, and over time, become familiar with the customs of the region. The regional alignment has the potential to develop habitual relationships between the United States and the partner nation military, enforcing the mil-to-mil and partnership engagement mission while strengthening training for both militaries. In essence, establishing and maintaining credibility with the nation’s military partners.

The United States must maintain credibility with its friends and allies; the mil-to-mil partnership/training mission is crucial to the stability of many regions. The nature of the mil-to-mil engagement and partnership training provides innovative, creative ways for Soldiers to hone skills while training partner nations, demonstrating the United States resolve to maintain relationships and keeping credibility. The mil-to-mil engagement and partnership training mission also strengthens the validity of the regional alignment and will deepen units understanding of the regions while building stronger relationships. Mil-to-mil engagements and partnership training also serves to



forward station troops while establishing relationships in areas the United States may otherwise not have been able to.

However, leadership is not focused on the partnership mission in any region much less the Asia Pacific region, despite the fact that the President highlighted the importance of the United States relationship with allies and partners in the Asia Pacific region to the point where he clearly articulates that the nation “will also expand our networks of cooperation with emerging partners throughout the Asia-Pacific to ensure collective capability and capacity for security common interests.”<sup>14</sup>

Based on the current plans to shift Army units to the Asia-Pacific, there is no doubt military leadership understood the direction to rebalance the force toward the Asia-Pacific region. What perhaps was not understood was the purpose behind the rebalancing.

Our relationships with Asian allies and key partners are critical to the future stability and growth of the region. We will emphasize our existing alliances, which provide a vital foundation for Asian-Pacific security.<sup>15</sup>

The intent of the Commander in Chief was clear, but the purpose behind the task didn't seem to be fully comprehended. The lack of cultural understanding and the heavy posturing of Army forces in the Asia-Pacific region could have the opposite effect on the United States desire to enlarge its partnership capacity in the region. The leadership didn't seem to take that information into consideration, as they began to attempt to define a mission for the future, the posturing of the forces reflected a mission for war or conflict, not a mission postured for partner building.

Army leadership is working diligently to define a role for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, through mission planning conferences such as Unified Quest, pulling the brightest strategic thinkers from around the military and around the country in an attempt to determine the

greatest threats and the Army role in the future. The mission planning conferences include partner nations, and serve to strengthen partnerships as noted by Australian Brig Barry N. McManus, military attaché and assistance defense attaché, Embassy of Australia, during the 2012 Winter Unified Quest planning meeting stated “strategic planning and wargames like this are especially important to strengthening partnerships with America’s allies.”<sup>16</sup> While actually planning for the future with partner nations is considered partnership building a mission seemingly overlooked is the partnership mission. Perhaps it is because the mission is not one that requires high tech equipment, or is not deemed important enough for the future to garner increased budgets, but regionally aligning forces does allow the partnership mission to be one that will be easy to carry out while providing commanders flexibility to use Soldiers and units for any mission that may be prioritized more important.

Though planners do not seem to be taking the mission into consideration, the importance of the partnership mission did not escape discussion between senior Army officers that gathered to talk about the Army’s future in building partnerships during a conference in October 2012. When being interviewed by POLITICO, LTG (R) David Barno, senior advisor at the Center for New American Security, noted:

This is one area where the Army is getting it right. The Army is not just an emergency device behind glass, and you break the glass if you have a war. The Army really sees a role for itself, rightfully, in being out there and engaging with other militaries around the world.<sup>17</sup>

There is no shortage of conflict around the globe, while leadership can hope to predict where the next crisis will arise, the flexibility to move troops rapidly and succinctly to the area of conflict is more valuable than forward stationing. Regardless of where a unit is stationed, the purpose and utility remains the same; train for regional

conflict while deployment in support of partnership and mil-to-mil training continues. The regional alignment supports the building of partnerships and strengthening existing relationships as it allows Soldiers to learn or enhance regional skills in an immersion type environment while practicing combat skills in exercises during mil-to-mil or partnership training.

The regional alignment of forces as a supporting task to the rebalancing of forces enhances the Army's ability to build building new partnerships and strengthening existing relationships while preparing for future missions. Though the task wasn't designated a key mission, the task is certainly a critical mission and one best suited for the Army given the fiscal constraints, one of the main reasons the new Defense Strategy was crafted.

#### Fiscal Constraints Increase Importance of Partnership Training

Based on the new Defense Strategy, the best mission for the Army is to build partnerships and maintain existing relationships. Current defense policies and Army doctrine support the mission; partnership and mil-to-mil engagement is what the Army does and does it will. However, due to the current fiscal constraints and the fight for long term resourcing, the Army continues to fight for viability among other services when it comes to mission. With tensions increasing around the globe and the nature of the threat shifting as well as the United States facing its own visible internal instability, the United States needs assurance from partners that they will continue to support the United States in the face of fiscal uncertainty. The Nations' fiscal woes and subsequent impact on the military has been very public and played out on the world stage, the Nations' partners have been watching with great interest. While Army leadership looks

for areas to save money, possibly at the expense of partners, perhaps they are making the problem more complex than necessary and overlooking the most critical mission; building new partnership while maintaining and even strengthening existing relationships.

Fiscal limitations pose a national security risk to the United States as highlighted in the Defense Strategy and acknowledged by all levels of leadership, both civilian and military. While the Defense Strategy does provide insight to what the President, as Commander in Chief, deems important, military leadership must determine which missions they consider crucial in the coming years. Army leadership has stated that based on funding shortfalls caused by sequestration and the continuing resolution, the Army cannot afford all the equipment deemed necessary to support all missions. What is the Presidents vision for the United States Department of Defense? The Defense Strategy provides the vision in the opening paragraphs, stating the United States will “join with allies and partners around the world to build their capacity to promote security, prosperity, and human dignity,”<sup>18</sup> while accomplishing the 10 key military tasks, rebalancing forces toward Asia-Pacific, and conducting partnership missions, regardless of fiscal challenges.

It is not unfathomable to think that after a decade of conflict on two fronts, the United States would be facing financial crisis and be reviewing the base strategic documents that drive the nation and missions, especially upon completion of one major conflict and planning for withdraw from another. The National Defense Strategy acknowledges risk may have to be taken in some areas, to include partnership training, but these risks must be clearly articulated to the nation’s partners, friends, and allies.

The key military mission dedicated to the partnership mission “provide a stabilizing presence” came with a caveat, on page 6 of the Defense Strategy: “however, with reduced resources, thoughtful choices will need to be made regarding the location and frequency of these operations.” But the caveat did not state that omission was an option, nor did the document provide guidance as to which region has precedence over another. In fact, every region was mentioned equally with regards to partnership.

The Army’s ability to join with allies and partners around the world is in question due to the continuing resolution and impending sequestration. The Army is facing deep cuts, over \$18B in the current fiscal year alone, which affects all areas of military operations; the area most impacted initially is Soldier training. Training is vital to maintaining Soldiers combat skills. Commanders continually seek innovative ways to train forces, while the United States seeks ways to maintain and foster relationships. One of the best ways to accomplish both is through mil-to-mil engagements and partnership training. “the Army is also necessary for training foreign militaries the world over. It is such mundane training missions, which never make the news which invigorate U.S. diplomacy in many a country.”<sup>19</sup> Historically, after major conflict the Army reduces expenditures and makes cuts to various programs. In a July 6, 2011 article titled “A Historical Perspective on Defense Budgets,” the authors point out that the funding crisis should not have been unexpected stating “Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton has to identify reasonable levels of defense expenditures as the United States transitioned from war spending to peacetime budgets.”<sup>20</sup> For 12 years the Army has been able to spend, unfettered, in support of two conflicts, and the President identified the timeline in which the services would exit each conflict. In many cases, equipment was purchased

off the shelf to meet the immediate needs of the warfighter with no second thought to costs associated with the maintenance, repair and replacement of the non-military equipment, thereby increasing the cost to the Army, and increasing the cost of the training. With a decrease in funding, Army leaders are now citing lack of equipment and funding as a reason for a shortfall in training, warning that sequestration will force curtailment of training for “80 percent of our ground forces”<sup>21</sup> Gen Odierno, as Chief of Staff of the Army, desires the best training programs and opportunities for Soldiers, but he acknowledges that “The Army also has to adapt its training programs for both cost and complexity, ensuring officers and noncommissioned officers alike are trained to be adaptable in complex environments, while still keeping training costs within budgetary constraints.”<sup>22</sup>

The Army has advanced equipment and extremely innovative, well trained Soldiers. To state that the lack of new equipment will hamper training is painting a picture that is opposite of what has been portrayed for the past 12 years. Further, Army officials have stated that reduced training will reduce retention in the Army, noting that reduction in equipment purchasing power would lead to a reduction in training and a subsequent retention problem.

A lot of kids that have tasted that [purchasing equipment off the shelf] are going to be asked not to do that anymore, he said. “Soldiers worry they will spend days counting trucks in the motor pool. That is a very real thing for a lot of young sergeants and officers.”<sup>23</sup>

Training is a function of leadership, and as such, there is ample training that can, and should be conducted to support regional alignment and combat missions that do not require additional money. The partnership mission, as continually highlighted in the Defense Strategy, is a mission that can be conducted without the newest of equipment.

The equipment often used by the nation's partners is not as advanced as the United States. Additionally, the tactics, techniques, and tactical procedures that would be trained and shared with partner nations during mil-to-mil training would provide practice for the Army's Soldiers, and the partnership exercise is an opportunity for Soldiers to hone combat skills in an environment in which they are becoming familiar, through regional alignment training.

To offset the cost of training large formations, many units have begun training at the squad level as well as conducting exercises at lower levels, which is a step towards a priority noted by Army Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen Odierno, during his House Armed Services Committee Posture hearing on February 17, 2013 to "have continued efforts to give our squads superiority on the battlefield, with advanced systems and weapons, communications, and protections."<sup>24</sup> The Army has determined small unit training teams, such as the squad, deployed regionally, are a cost effective method to conduct partnership and mil-to-mil training. Training at the squad level is innovative, and challenges leaders that have been battle tested to provide ways to train minimal resources. This technique is a return to the basics, which will be unfamiliar to Soldiers that entered the Army after September 11, 2001, but the basics are not unfamiliar to the leadership that have made hard decisions about training based on funding shortfalls in the past.

One aspect of fiscal responsibility and cost reduction should include determining which missions are critical and in which areas the military and the nation can accept risk. In an attempt to mitigate the effects of cutting back on costs, Army leadership has been looking at all areas to reduce spending, but with so many new missions deemed

critical, and no identified way to cut back on missions while looking to validate or obtain higher budgets, military leadership has inadvertently made every mission a priority. Given fiscal crisis, how can the U.S. Army accomplish every mission, implied and directed, in the Defense Strategy, in a time of fiscal austerity? Though military leadership is still working through the cut back/mission conundrum, the answer may be spelled out in the Commander in Chief's guidance, the Defense Strategy. Through mil-to-mil engagement and partnership training; this mission in particular allows the Army to maintain proficiency in combat skills while learning about regions of the world and training the nation's partners and allies.

With the sole focus of the budget being places on new, innovative missions, and future warfare, the United States cannot afford to replace the age old, tried, and true aspect of face to face, mil-to-mil and partnership relationships when it comes to diplomacy. The only way to maintain current friends or make new partners is to bring something to the relationship and nurture old ones. World leaders are obtuse and fickle, they tend to have long memories and though the friends and partners of the United States are called such, they remember the United States actions from history and will ask the United States for assistance much as the United States has asked for assistance for the past 12 years. The United States risks losing partners and friends if they are not mindful of partner's needs, inherently, everything is a calculated risk. However, as stated by Gen Odierno, "In the modern era, it is difficult to envision a scenario where the United States would engage in military operation without allies."<sup>25</sup> The United States must continue to prioritize the partnership training and mil-to-mil engagement mission higher.



Regardless of chosen mission and where the partnership and mil-to-mil engagement mission is prioritized, the new Defense Strategy specifically stated that the United States would no longer fight protracted land wars, whether for fiscal reasons or for the lack of appetite for using war as a means of policy. The Army's core competencies and capability for fighting will wane in the ever cyclical manner and the Army risks losing its tactical edge, but how much of an edge is lost due to training should be minimal if the fiscal crisis is the measure and building new partnerships and strengthening existing relationships while preparing for the next the mission.

Since the release of the new Defense Strategy in January 2012, the United States defense priorities have shifted due to a new national security risk, namely the financial crisis. The United States Army, facing across the board cuts due to sequestration and the continuing resolution, is perhaps the most affected of all services. Regardless of cuts, the leadership is working diligently to define a future mission for the service based on the vision and guidance provided in the defense strategy. While the missions through the years have evolved along with the threats, there has been a constant recognition of the nations' ground force by the United States friends and partners for providing training, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and other operations. These operations have served to strengthen the United States' existing partnerships and establish new ones along the way.

Based on the new Defense Strategy, the best mission for the Army is to cultivate new partnerships and strengthen existing relationships. Existing defense policies and Army Doctrine supports the mission; partnership and mil-to-mil engagement is what the Army does and does it well. As the Army continues to rebalance the force in accordance

with the Presidents vision and begins regional alignment and subsequent training, the creative and innovative methods Soldiers will develop that in line with the regional customs have the potential to increase the strength of the existing partnerships and demonstrate the resolve to those partners whom the United States wished to establish new relationships. The cost of keeping the Army well trained will remain high, but a careful examination of the methods used to train while reducing costs will require a mission that consolidations of time and efforts and still supports the Presidents vision of the United States as published in the National Defense Strategy, that points towards building partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships.

When the new Defense Strategy was drafted, the senior leadership of the United States and the Army was facing the end of two conflicts and a fiscal challenge; however, global challenges have not decreased, regional instability continues, and the fiscal challenge has come to bear in the form of sequestration and the cuts are now in the execution phase. The only variable that has changed since the publishing of the new Defense Strategy is the United States is no longer embroiled in two conflicts. Perhaps the time has come to re-examine the missions, directives, and guidance set forth in the new Defense Strategy and, and a minimum, place prioritization and acceptable risk parameters within the document itself. If the prioritization and emphasis is placed on partnerships and mil-to-mil engagements this may lend to the stability and security of the United States while easing tensions around the globe.

Based on the guidance in the new Defense Strategy, the regional alignment of forces, and the budget constraints, the mission that best suits the long term needs of the nation and the partners, while keeping the Army trained within the confines of the

budget limitations is the mil-to-mil/partnership training mission. While the guidance and intent on the surface seems uncertain, all seems to direct the services, the Army in particular, in the same direction. Focusing on maintaining and building partnerships will keep the Army prepared for whatever is to come.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Barack Obama, *National Security Strategy*, (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2010), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Barack Obama, *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense* (Washington, DC: The White House), January 2012, 5. The missions listed are annotated on page 5 and 6 with further details on each mission.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, Introduction.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *2013 Army Strategic Planning Guidance*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, February 4), 2013, 9.

<sup>7</sup> Amaani Lyle, "Official Lauds State Partnership Program, Pairing Process," *American Forces Press Service*, March 6, 2013, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=119456>, (accessed March 7, 2013).

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 1-6.

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<sup>18</sup> Obama, *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense*, Introduction.

<sup>19</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, "The Lonely U.S. Army," *Stratfor.com*, October 31, 2012, [http://stratfor.com/the\\_lonely\\_US\\_Army](http://stratfor.com/the_lonely_US_Army), (accessed November 28, 2012).

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